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## PRESS RELEASE

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**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

## Goleta Water District Files Suit to Protect Goleta Groundwater Resources

On February 13, 2015, the Goleta Water District (District) filed a Complaint for Declaratory and Injunctive Relief (Complaint) in the Superior Court of Santa Barbara County against the owners of a private ranch in the Goleta Foothills, known as the "Slippery Rock Ranch," in order to halt exportation of water outside of the local watershed and to protect the Goleta Basin for the benefit of the District's customers.

The District possesses appropriative water rights to extract water from the Goleta Basin, plus any temporary surplus water, per the terms of the judgment known as the "Wright Judgment." The Wright Judgment court ruled that the water supply in the Goleta Basin is fully subscribed, with no surplus appropriative water supplies available. The District manages the Basin under the guidance of the Wright Judgment court.

Slippery Rock Ranch overlies a fractured bedrock area that contains water supplies which are tributary to and within the watershed of the Goleta Basin. The District alleges that the ranch owners' plans to appropriate and export water from the bedrock area to users outside of the District and to water agencies including Montecito Water District will cause material, irreparable injury to the District and its customers, in contravention of the water rights adjudicated and the physical solution established under the Wright Judgment.

Any appropriation and exportation of water by the private ranch owners will reduce the amount of water available for the District's customers and others with water rights in the Basin, according to the Complaint.

District Board President Lauren Hanson stated, "The decision to file the Complaint is not a decision the District took lightly. The Board of Directors unanimously felt this action was necessary to protect the District's rights on behalf of our community. The Goleta Water District is committed to preserving the integrity of the Goleta Basin for its residents and the surrounding environment."

Board President Hanson added, "Our groundwater supplies are precious. Over the years, Goleta Water District ratepayers have invested millions of dollars to provide for the long term sustainability of the basin, so that the water will be there for them in times of water scarcity and drought. California is in such a time right now and the District will continue to do everything it can to help Goleta Valley residents, schools, commercial and agricultural enterprises get through this epic drought."

The Goleta Water District provides water to a diverse population of approximately 87,000 in the Goleta Valley area, including agricultural, residential, commercial, industrial, and institutional customers. The District's water system includes over 270 miles of pipelines, a water treatment plant, storage reservoirs, pumping facilities, active wells, a recycled water system, and connections with Lake Cachuma and the State Water Project.

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